One Hundred and Twenty-five Years of Grace
1861 - 1986

PRAISE YE THE LORD.
O GIVE THANKS UNTO THE LORD
FOR HE IS GOOD. *Ps. 106:1*

St. Peter's
Evangelical Lutheran Church
Mishicot, Wisconsin

VIEWS OF PROGRESS

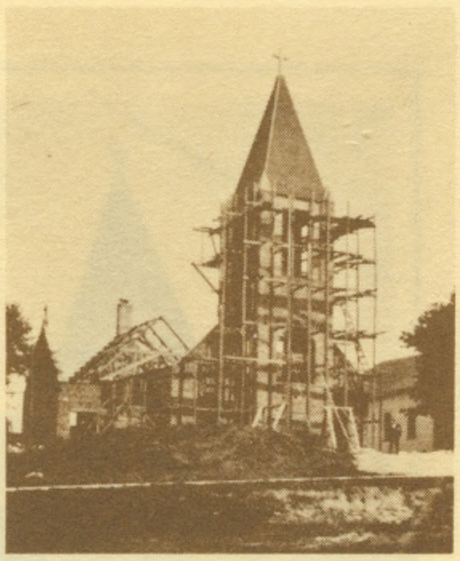
CHURCH AND PARSONAGE

THE CHURCH WAS BUILT IN 1875. THE PARSONAGE, IN 1902.

THE ABOVE BUILDING WAS CONSTRUCTED OF RED GRANITE STONE OBTAINED FROM RED GRANITE, WISCONSIN AND WAS DEDICATED TO THE SERVICE OF THE LORD ON JUNE 12, 1927.

VIEWS OF BUILDING AS IT APPEARED IN 1986.

VIEWS OF CONSTRUCTION AND COMPARISON.



1930's

1985

Resident Pastors

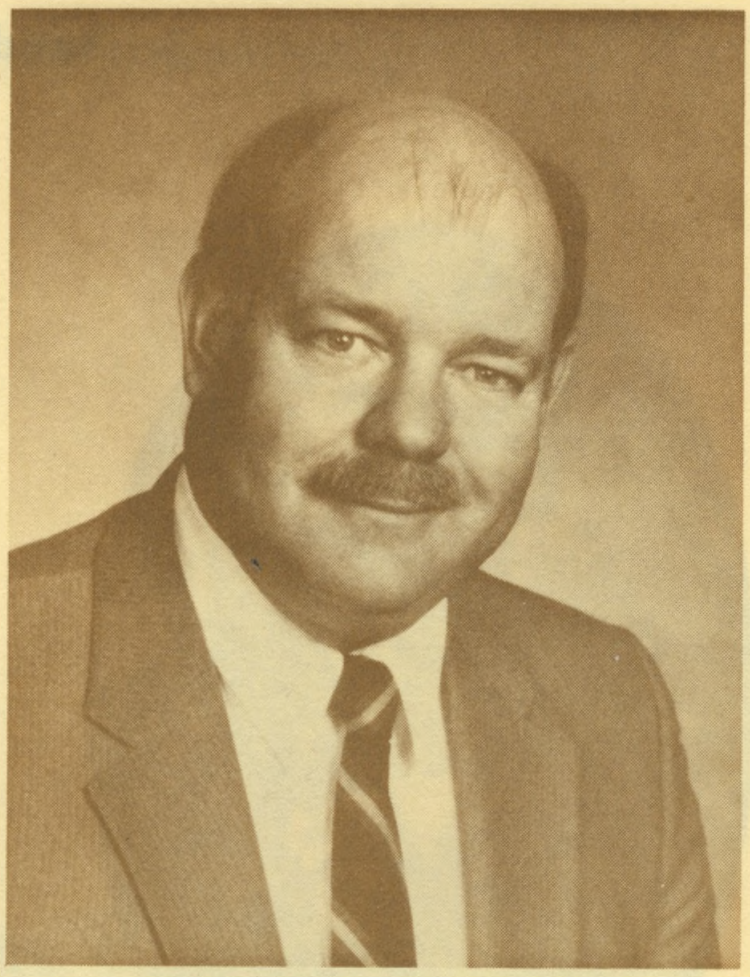
Gustav Vater
1902 - 1907

E. Ph. Dornfeld
1908 - 1911

Edward Zell
1911 - 1958

David Worgull
1958 - 1965

HERBERT H. KESTING
1966 - 1985



DAVID W. WAEGE
1985 -

"PEOPLE FROM ST. PETER'S CONGREGATION WHO WENT ON IN CHURCH WORK"

PASTORS

Rev. Kenneth Vertz
Northwestern Prep School
Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary - 1934

Rev. George Barthels
Northwestern Prep School
Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary - 1938

Rev. Edward Zell
Northwestern Prep School
Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary - 1945

Rev. William Zell
Northwestern Prep School
Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary - 1947

Rev. William Redeker
Concordia College
Concordia Seminary St. Louis - 1958

Rev. Paul Soukop
Northwestern Prep School
Bethany College
Mankato State
Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary - 1967

Rev. Paul Schleis
Northwestern Lutheran College
Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary - 1983

TEACHERS

Lorraine Liese
Concordia College
River Forest IL - 1943

Lois Meissner Eckley
DMLC (attended)
Started teaching - 1953

Audrey Lambert Dutton
DMLC (attended)
Concordia College
River Forest IL - 1960

Daniel Kunz
DMLC
Graduated 1973

David Schultz
DMLC
Graduated - 1975

Margaret Barthels
DMLC
Graduated 1982

NURSING

Katherine Barthels Wendland
African Medical Mission
October 1977 to May 1980

1861 - 1986

125 Years of St. Peter's Ev. Lutheran Congregation

1861 - May 20, 1861 was the date of the formal organization of St. Peter's Congregation. The first services were conducted in a school house on Cemetery Hill.

1871 - Purchased property for the first church.

1875 - First church built between the parsonage and present church.

1881 - Membership dues set at $3.00.

1902 - Rockwood Lutheran Church joined St. Peter's to form one parish. Parsonage built at Mishicot.

1911 - Celebration of 50 years for the congregation. Pastor Edward Zell, a graduate of the Seminary, ordained and installed in July.

1912 - He was united in marriage with Alice Jindra, who served as organist. Pastor Zell also served the Norwegian Congregation at Jambo Creek until it disbanded in 1949.

1914 - The school term was changed from six months to an eight month session.

1915 - One lot bought from Eli Peltier. System of giving by envelopes and recording of gifts began.

1917 - New church bell purchased, which is still being rung today.

1918 - School closed.

1920 - English services started on one Sunday a month.

1925 - By a vote of 37 - 1, decision was made to build a new church. The school building was sold and moved to Main St. to become a harness shop as it was in the way for the erection of the new church.

1927 - New church built of granite stone, dedicated on June 12, 1927. Former Pastors Doehler, Dornfeld and Vater took part in the services. Total cost of the new building was $29,000.00.

1930 - Voted to have all English services, but to keep one German service a month which was dropped in 1957.

1932 - Girls choir organized, conducted by Miss Alice Zell.

1933 - The Ladie's Bible Hour was organized.

1942 - Three lots were purchased directly behind the present church building.

1948 - Organ fund started.

1951 - Concrete floor of the church was covered with asphalt tile.

1952 - Decorative iron railings placed on the steps and wall in front of the church.

1953 - 1959 Pews added for more seating, organ moved to the back of the church, which was the Sunday School room. Doors dividing church and school room removed. Seating increased by 100. Garden and bean field to the north of the church was transformed into a parking lot. Pastor Zell presented with the keys to a new car on the occasion of their 41st wedding anniversary.

1954 - Parsonage kitchen extensively remodeled.

1955 - A new Conn electronic organ purchased.

1956 - Public address system purchased. Observance of Pastor Zell's 45th anniversary in the Ministry.

1958 - After a few years of failing health, the Lord called his servant, Pastor Zell to his eternal rest after serving for nearly 47 years. Pastor David Worgull installed as our pastor, coming from serving a congregation at Naper, Nebraska.

1958 - 1965 Vacation Bible School begun, new garage built, outdoor bulletin board erected, 4 acres of land purchased to the north of the church for a future Christian Day School.

1965 - Pastor Worgull accepted a call to Menasha, WI after serving 7 years as pastor at St. Peter's. Pastor A. Schmeling served as vacancy pastor until November 1966. Parsonage remodeled at a cost of $10,500.00.

1966 - Pastor Herbert Kesting of Gibbon, Minnesota installed.

1967 - Joint meeting of the Rockwood and St. Peter's Young People's Society resumed.

1968 - An assistant used to help with Communion.

1969 - Upstairs of the parsonage remodeled. New gas-fired furnace installed in the church.

1970 - One envelope system begun, new light fixtures for the church dedicated, new bathroom for the parsonage, Board of Education appointed.

1971 - Voters approved a large addition to the church. First pictorial church directory planned. Celebration of the 35th Anniversary of Pastor Kesting's ordination.

1972 - Easter ground breaking for the addition of the Education Wing. Additional land purchased for more parking. Dedication of the addition on October 22, 1972.

1973 - Miss Alice Zell recognized for having directed the choir for 40 years. Ladies Bible Hour observed it's 40th Anniversary. Introduction of "Greeters" at the church exits after services.

1974 - Parking lot blacktopped. Baptistry renovated. A new piano received for the Choir room.

1976 - The steam boiler changed to a hot water system. Saturday School started. The beginning of Monday evening services for the three summer months.

1977 - Church tower repaired, Kathy Barthels commissioned as missionary nurse to Africa.

1979 - Church interior redecorated, beautiful red carpeting laid, Lexon windows installed over the stained glass windows, church phone installed.

1981 - New gas furnace for parsonage.

1982 - New roof over Educational Wing, a new Public Address system installed, organ fund started, new Sunday School material introduced, "Reaching Out" launched.

1983 - A Mortgage Burning service held on June 26th, also the electronic Carillon donated by Mr. & Mrs. Frederick Eisenman dedicated. An extra communion service per month added with individual cups, common cup celebrated on the last Sunday of the month.

1984 - Pastor Kesting retired after serving 18 years at St. Peter's. Pastor David Waege called from Valentine, Nebraska to serve our combined parish. Installation service was March 3, 1985.

1985 - Monday evening services to continue through the year.

1986 - Voters approved opening a Christian Day school, starting with grades K - 2 in the fall of 1986. A call was accepted by Miss Bonnie Enter of Green Bay. The celebration of our 125th Anniversary, May through November, with guest preachers each month.

ST. PETER'S HISTORICAL TRIVIA

The Zell Era:

Traditionally, the New Year's Eve bell ringing was the duty of the sexton, Diedrich Wenholz. He would walk more than a cold mile to be 'on time'. He did receive help as years went by and younger people came to his assistance. As novices, their inexperience showed itself when one got his leg entangled in the rope and another rang so hard that the bell tipped. He had to climb the inside of the tower and return it to "normal" before services on New Year's Day. "Womens' Lib" young ladies who forgot to release the rope on the upswing went floating heavenward with it.

Although there was no vandalism during the building of the new church, young boys living close to church were sometimes discouraged by the Architect, Prof. Koehler, with his "BIG GUN"!

Christmas Eve Services in 1926 were held in the new building. The sand floor was strewn with evergreen branches so if you dropped your penny or nickel, it took a while to find it, and if you did, your hands were dirty. The trees (four or six in number - depending on size) were decorated with red candy cherries and stick-candy. These treats were cherished by the Sunday School students for several Sundays after Christmas. Maybe it stimulated Sunday School attendance. Electric lights replaced the tree candles used in the old church, thus relieving the "candle-watchers" and the need for pails of water and damp towels for fire prevention.

Catechumens learned the true meaning of "in the sweat of thy face" by carrying pails of water to the newly planted trees and shrubbery after Edward Eckardt landscaped the property. Some picked beans for honest wages after class-time in a field that is now our parking lot. These chores did not excuse one from writing the Ten Commandments from memory---including the punctuation.

Although played by the organist on the new Estey organ, music for the Amens did not resound when the person pumping the air for the organ day-dreamed during the liturgy.

The pastor's wife was frightened and astonished when two black-colored men emerged in a hurry from the church's boiler room through a back door. The pastor and a friend, who was a general "handy-man", August Antholz, were fixing the furnace and it "back-fired".

Pastor David Worgull writes:

"The grounds around the church took on a new look when the trees and shrubs between the house and church were taken out and grass filled the entire area. Then the old barn was torn down and the garage and breezeway were added to the back of the house. In order to have a two door garage, the two doors were put towards the parking lot and one door toward the driveway leading to the street. Oh, how I remember that driveway with the little slope that was just enough to get our 1957 Mercury rolling when one day I was visiting with someone on the east porch and saw my car slowly going down the driveway toward the street - without a driver. As it turned out, there was a very short driver behind the wheel who had pushed the NEUTRAL button and there he was taking his first driving lesson without the benefit of a Driver's Ed. class or a driving instructor.

Toward the end of our stay in Mishicot there was talk of remodeling the 'front end' of the house, and a few years after we had moved to Menasha we visited in the Mishicot parsonage and enjoyed seeing how nicely it had been remodeled. No more east side front porch; now there was a bedroom downstairs. Then there were such vast improvements made to the church building that it hardly seemed like the same structure. What a joy to see that rooms had been provided for a Christian Day School. We had always prayed for a Christian Day School in Mishicot congregation. And what a joy it was the day we heard that you will be opening a Christian Day School now."

Pastor Herbert Kesting writes:

"Something very special happened 20 years ago in the fall of 1966. The congregation had been vacant for nearly a year and a half. After sending out 12 calls for a pastor without success, a call was sent to Rev. Herbert Kesting of Gibbon, Minnesota.

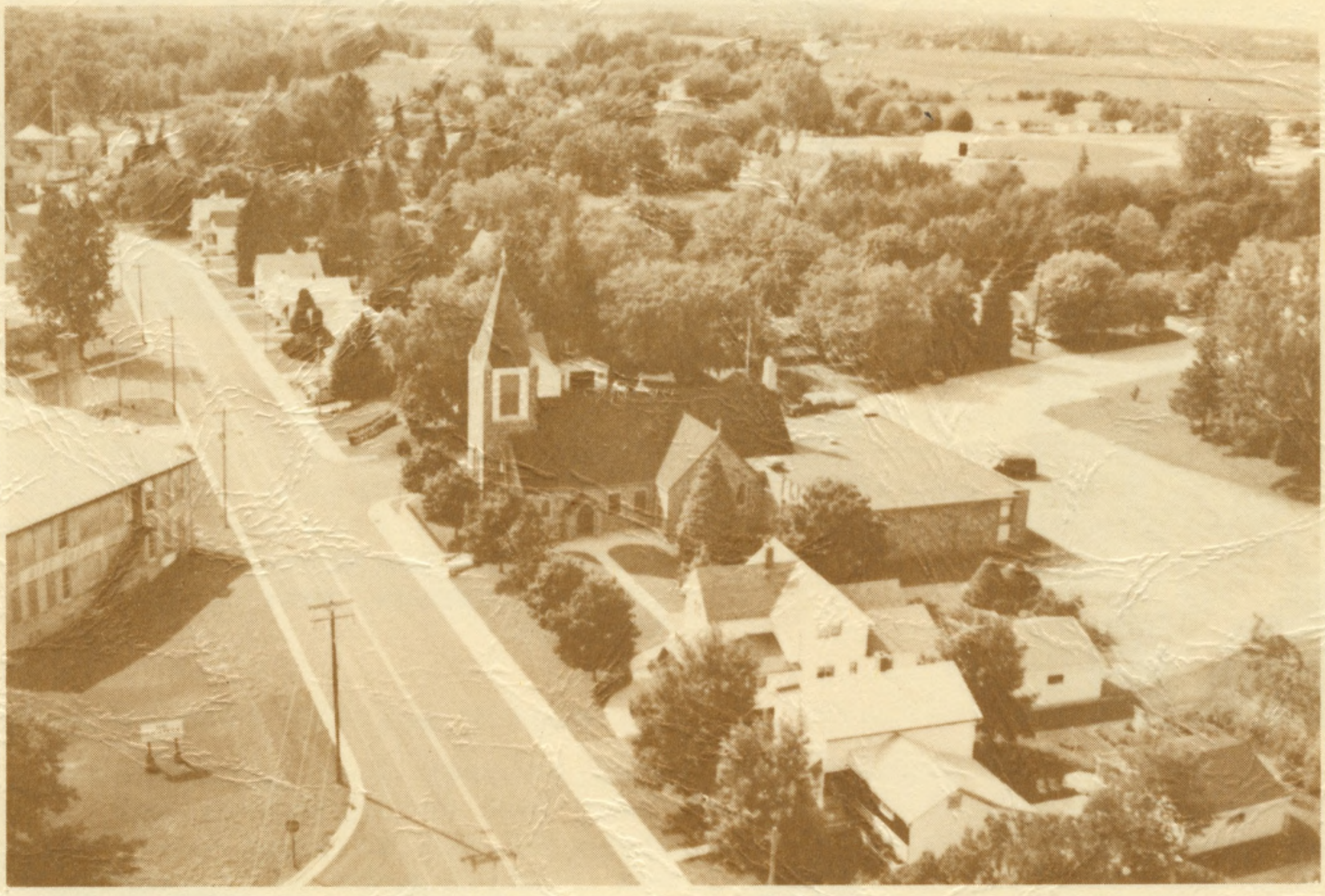
After due deliberation he decided that the Lord had more work for him to do in the Mishicot-Rockwood parish than at Gibbon, where he had served 15 years. After the congregation at Gibbon had given him a peaceful release at a special meeting, he called Rev. A. L. Schmeling, the vacancy pastor, and told him of his decision to accept the call to Mishicot-Rockwood.

But there was a problem. Besides the usual furniture, appliances, books, etc., Pastor Kesting also had lumber which he wanted to take along. Who ever heard of a minister with lumber! But the problem was worked out. Two members from Gibbon with a farm truck hauled the lumber, large work bench, and power tools. - No, this wasn't ordinary lumber. It consisted mostly of black walnut, butternut, cherry, and other hardwoods. You see, Pastor Kesting was a woodworker whose hobby was furniture making. He needed the lumber. Every minister needs some recreation.

After such a long vacancy the congregation was glad to get a minister of its own, even if they had to take one with lumber."

1986: THE YEAR OF JUBILATION; THE YEAR OF THANKSGIVING; THE YEAR OF DEDICATION TO EXTENDED CHRISTIAN EDUCATION. WE TRUST IN HIM TO HELP US IN THIS ENDEAVOR TO EDUCATE OUR CHILDREN ADEQUATELY FOR LIVING ON EARTH AND ALSO BE PREPARED FOR ETERNITY IN HEAVEN.

A VIEW FROM THE NORTH, THE THIRD CLASSROOM, WEST OF THE ENTRANCE.

MISS BONNIE ENTER ACCEPTED THE CALL TO TEACH AT ST. PETER'S CHRISTIAN DAY SCHOOL. SCHOOL WILL START IN SEPT. 1986, FOR GRADES KINDERGARTEN THROUGH SECOND. A GRADE WILL BE ADDED EACH YEAR THEREAFTER.

A VIEW OF THE EAST WING WHICH PROVIDES TWO CLASSROOMS.